



Through studying a degree in Political Science and International Relations, graduates develop a valuable set of skills that are transferable to a range of careers. These skills can include:

- Political analysis
- Understanding the ways that laws and economic policies are developed
- Understanding globalisation and its effects on our politics and economy
- Policy formulation and analysis
- Understanding international relations, international law and diplomacy
- Interpretive thinking
- Thinking critically, creatively and challenging ideas
- Logical and quantitative reasoning
- Problem solving skills adaptable to differing contexts
- Oral and written communication
- Research and computing.

What do employers look for?

Many employers look for generic skills such as communication, client/customer-focus, bicultural competence, cultural awareness, teamwork and initiative.

With technology, globalisation, and other drivers changing society, skills such as resilience, problem solving, and adaptability are important.

Skills that are likely to grow in importance include analytical and creative thinking, systems thinking, technological literacy, AI and big data.*

*World Economic Forum: www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills

How can these skills be developed?

- Some skills are gained through studying
- Extra-curricular activities can help, such as getting involved in clubs, mentoring, cultural groups, part-time work or volunteering
- Be open to professional and personal development opportunities, whether it is undertaking work experience, overseas exchange, skills seminar, or joining an industry group.



Political Science and International Relations students gain skills that can be applied in a wide range of exciting careers within politics and in areas such as law, business, education and journalism.

UC graduates have been employed in:

- Aotearoa New Zealand government agencies such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Health NZ, Business, Innovation & Employment, as well as the Treasury, Te Puni Kiri, Immigration New Zealand, Parliament, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Iwi and Māori governance bodies for example Te Rōnanga o Ngāi Tahu
- Regional councils
- Tertiary institutions
- International agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Not-for-profits like St John and the Red Cross
- Private companies in banking, insurance, media, legal, finance, recruitment, and education sectors
- Public and private organisations in other countries such as Australia, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.



Graduates with this degree are employed in a range of jobs — see some examples below.

Policy analyst / advisor

- Identify and investigate issues and opportunities e.g. in society, law or governance
- Interpret existing policies and consult with stakeholders or brief leaders
- Prepare and present reports and recommendations for policy development

Governance manager / support officer / advisor

- Support and advise appointed leaders such as councillors or members of parliament
- Ensure compliance with public sector and/or local government legislation
- Manage multiple relationships and interactions

Executive assistant / MP assistant, legislative aide to an MP

- Liaise with constituents, other politicians, the media, lobbyists, community groups
- Draft materials informed by local, regional, national and international issues
- Promote the politician's work

Parliamentary officer

- Keep and maintain records
- Assist in the development of policies
- Prepare reports and make recommendations to support senior members

Diplomat, foreign Policy Officer

- Promote Aotearoa New Zealand's interests overseas
- Report on affairs and develop foreign and trade policies
- Liaise with local authorities and negotiate agreements with other countries

Immigration officer / manager

- Examine documentation such as passports
- Approve or reject entry into a country
- Organise the removal of people who have broken immigration law

International aid worker

- Manage and assess projects
- Support long-term development
- Evaluate responses to emergency situations

Iwi relationships manager

- Develop strategic direction and objectives to build successful and enduring partnerships with iwi/M ori
- Provide advice and support to boards and senior leadership teams
- Develop cultural capability and manage relationships risks

Community development officer

- Promote the well-being and engagement of diverse communities
- Support people to create and implement plans to make improvements in their community

Communications / media advisor, journalist

- Develop information, media and communication strategies
- Research, write, edit and produce content for various audiences and mediums

Export / customs coordinator

- Specialise in domestic and international markets or laws
- Inspect or coordinate mail, import and export goods
- Administer documentation and ensure adherence to the law

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Advocate
- Research analyst / assistant
- Business development advisor
- Court registry officer
- Environment protection officer
- Client onboarding coordinator
- Comment moderator
- Social media coordinator
- Intelligence support officer
- Judges' clerk
- Legal aid debt officer
- Library assistant
- Performance auditor
- Policy and procedure writer
- Technology specialist.



Political Science and International Relations graduates can undertake further study from honours through to PhD-level, which can lead to a career in tertiary teaching and research. UC offers a Master of Policy and Governance, and a Master of International Relations and Diplomacy. Many Arts graduates go on to study teaching, journalism or management.

Further study may facilitate career benefits

- Journalism or management.

